

the Almagest

February 21, 2002

Pudendum!

Volume 41, Number 3

"Vagina Monologues" share female experience

Stories of struggle, adjustment and joy told to raise money to fight violence against women

by
Matthew Morris

"The Vagina Monologues" debuted last week at LSUS as part of the national V-Day college campaign dedicated to fighting violence against women.

"I didn't know what to expect, except hopefully some good laughs," said Bishop Ostteen, a fourth year history major who attended the performance Saturday night.

"The Monologues" featured LSUS students and others performing Eve Ensler's candid portrayals of various women's stories about learning to be comfortable with being a woman in today's society.



Photo by Matt Morris

Annie Todd delivers a "Happy Vagina Fact" during last week's Vagina Monologues, held at LSUS for the first time

In addition, the performance brought attention to the assaults on women's rights every day around the world.

Lindsay Meade, director and producer, said she thought the shows went very well.

"The response afterwards was wonderful," Meade said.

The performances made the audience laugh, cry and even shout a certain four-letter Middle English term for the female genitalia.

Controversy over the word "vagina" and female sexuality is part of what made "The Vagina Monologues" popular, as it provokes women to discuss their sexuality frankly and openly.

"I've learned that talking

about vaginas is taboo in our society," said Audra Muslow, an LSUS alumnus who attended the Saturday show.

Some of the performers were dissatisfied in the lack of coverage "The Monologues" got in the Shreveport area, despite numerous press releases.

"I think the subject matter is something that shouldn't be silenced, something that's taboo," said Alicia Bates, a senior psychology major who performed during the monologues. "Without attention, violence will continue to be a part of many women's lives."

Continued on pg. 5

American Studies brings best-selling author to LSUS

By
Dean Jagot

Nationally known presidential historian Michael Beschloss is set to speak in the University Center on Friday, April 5, at 9 a.m.

Beschloss will talk about many U.S. presidents including Abraham Lincoln and Lyndon B. Johnson. The American Studies program is sponsoring the event, which is free to the public.

"He is a great speaker, who is relatively young and energetic," said Dr. William D. Pederson, professor of political science.

Pederson said he hopes about 500 people will be in the audience of the nationally acclaimed speaker.

Beschloss, who was

named "the nation's leading presidential historian" by Newsweek Magazine, has written several books, including two national bestsellers.

He is a regular commentator on "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," on PBS and a contributor to ABC News.

In fact, Beschloss had to cancel his scheduled appearance at LSUS last October because ABC needed him for commentary after Sept. 11.

One of his bestsellers is "Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-1964." The book is the first of a three-book project.

The book focuses on the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination and Johnson's concern about fighting a land war in Vietnam.

The second book of

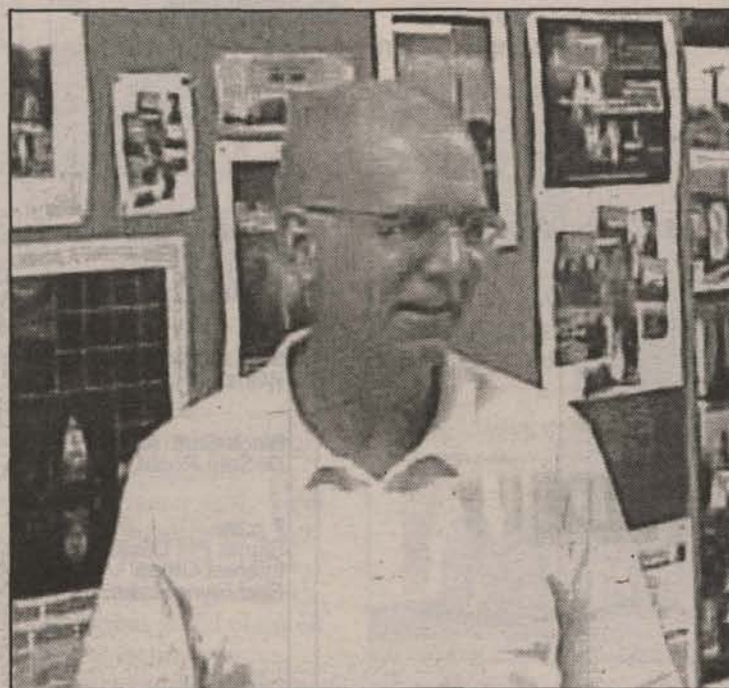


Photo by Matt Morris

Dr. William Pederson, political science guru, is bringing Michael Beschloss to LSUS Friday, April 5 at 9 a.m.

Beschloss's projected trilogy, "Reaching for Glory: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1964-1965," was released last November.

Beschloss's other bestseller, "The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963," focuses on the Vienna Summit, Cuban Missile Crisis and the Kennedy assassination.

The book won the Ambassador Book Prize for American Studies in 1991, the year it was published.

Beschloss, who attended school at Eaglebrook School, Andover, Williams College and Harvard Business School, began his career as a historian at the Smithsonian Institution in 1982.

For more information, call Donna Byrd at 797-5138.

Spectra literary journal begins accepting submissions

By
Heather Hovis

Spectra, the literary journal published by LSUS, is accepting submissions from students, alumni and faculty.

The annual journal includes submissions of various types of work, but primarily poetry and short stories, from students of all majors.

Spectra, which is free of charge, has been published for many years. Dr. Dorie LaRue has been the adviser for the past 13 years.

Each year a student editor works in conjunction with LaRue to evaluate the submissions and determine which pieces will be published.

This year's student editor, 26-year-old Derek Barton, is

a graduate student seeking a master's degree in liberal arts with a focus in English.

LaRue describes Barton, who obtained his bachelor's degree from Florida State University, as a very creative writer.

She said Barton is the first male Spectra editor with whom she has worked.

Once the journal is compiled, other faculty members in the English department assist in proofreading the journal before it goes to print.

Previous editions of Spectra have included essays, research or scholarly papers and artwork.

Due to the limited funding that the journal receives from student activities fees, artwork will be used only on the cover of Spectra this year.

LaRue said the majority

of the submissions are usually work from the creative writing classes she teaches.

Students in these classes have the option to have all their class writings considered for publication.

Barton said his vision for this year's edition of Spectra is to make it more diversified.

He also said he hopes to have work submitted from various majors, as well as the faculty and alumni.

Submissions may be dropped off at the drop box outside LaRue's office in Room 214 of Bronson Hall or e-mailed to spectra2002@hotmail.com.

The deadline for submissions is March 31.

Spectra goes to print in April and is scheduled to be available for distribution by the end of the semester.

Rotaract Club holds clothing drive for needy

by
Misty McClintock

The LSUS Rotaract Club wrapped up its clothing drive for the needy residents of Providence House in Shreveport last week.

The drive, which was held Feb. 4-15, was the idea of Dawn Reed, a member of one of the eight local Rotary Clubs. Collection barrels were located in buildings on campus.

The LSUS Rotaract Club is sponsored by the South Shreveport Rotary Club.

"The primary goal of our club is service," said Dr. Charlotte Jones, dean of the College of Business and adviser of the LSUS organization. Jones has been a member of the Rotary Club for one year and "loves it."

Rotaract Club members must participate in one chari-

ty project each month.

Members held an Adopt a Family program in December at the Gingerbread House for abused children and their mothers.

In January, Rotaract Club members collected coats for children at the Providence House and others as part of Coats for Kids.

In the past, members have served in soup kitchens.

Next month, the club will participate in the Adopt a Highway program by adopting a section of highway that members will keep free of litter.

Although most of the current members are business majors, the organization is open to students of all majors.

For more information on Rotaract Club and its projects, contact Jones at 797-5384.

Calendar of events

Thu Feb 21

10:30 a.m.
SGA meeting
Webster Room

Black Stud. Assoc.
Pilots Room

3:30 p.m.
Export/Import Seminar
Caddo/Bossier

7 p.m.
Movie "Shrek"
U.C. Theater

Sigma Phi Epsilon
Red River Room

Fri Feb 22

6:30 p.m.
Phi Eta Sigma
Webster Room

6:30 p.m.
Bagpipe Concert
DeSoto Room

Sat Feb 23

Sun Feb 24

5 p.m.
Tau Kappa Epsilon
DeSoto Room

Zeta Tau Alpha
Webster and Pilots

Mon Feb 25

Tue Feb 26

10:30 p.m.
Chi Alpha Meeting
Webster Room

Wed Feb 27

7 p.m.
Society of Reason
U.C. Second Floor

Thur Feb 28

10:30 a.m.
"Bamboula 2000"
U.C.

SGA meeting
Webster Room

Black Stud. Assoc.
DeSoto Room

7 p.m.
Sigma Phi Epsilon
Interest Group
Red River Room

Fri March 1

12 p.m.
SOC meeting
Webster Room

6:30 p.m.
Chi Alpha Meeting
DeSoto Room

Sat March 2

2:30 p.m.
Celebration of
Women's Week
Breathing Workshop
Caddo/Bossier Room

Sun March 3

Chancellor Vincent Marsala: Who is he? Where is he?

By
Rachel Hayes

Chancellor Vincent Marsala has been a part of LSUS since it opened 35 years ago.

He began his career at LSUS as an assistant professor teaching history and political science.

Becoming chancellor was not one of his career goals, he said, and it is not something that happened over night.

It took 28 years for Marsala to rise from assistant professor to chancellor of LSUS.

Marsala began his college career at Northeast State University, which is now University of Louisiana at Monroe.

In 1958, Marsala graduated from Northeast with a bachelor's degree in general studies with a concentration in history and political

science.

After graduation, he went into the Army as a second lieutenant. He spent seven years in the reserves and six months in active duty. In 1962, Marsala earned a master's degree in political science from LSU, and then taught at Northeast for one year.

In January 1967, he graduated with a doctorate degree in Latin American studies from LSU.

Marsala said he was inspired to teach by Perry Howard, one of his professors. Marsala said Howard was an outstanding classroom professor who took a personal interest in every one of his students.

He knew how to motivate students in the classroom, and Marsala wanted to be able to show the same kind of interest in his own students.

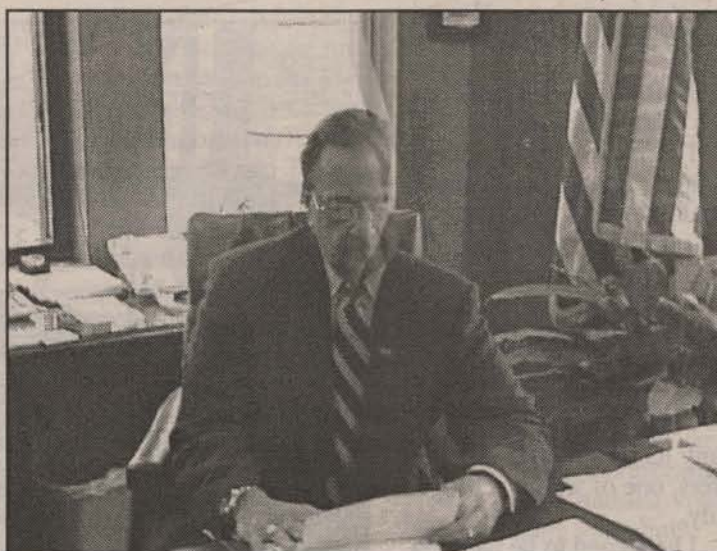


Photo by Dominic Claiborne

Chancellor Vincent Marsala taught history and political science when he first came to LSUS in 1967. He was named chancellor in 1995.

Marsala said he loved teaching and never planned on getting involved in administration, but as LSUS continued to grow and expand, the promotions kept coming.

He was selected as chan-

cellor of LSUS in 1995.

In his spare time, Marsala said he enjoys shotgun shooting and duck hunting in southern Arkansas.

He and his wife, Carol, will celebrate 43 years of

marriage this year. They have one daughter, Shawne, who is a school psychologist.

Being with LSUS since the beginning and seeing everything the university has accomplished has been a rewarding experience, Marsala said.

"LSUS has an outstanding staff and student body," he said.

Marsala said being more involved with the students is something that he wishes he had more time to do.

Marsala's busy schedule often keeps him traveling out of town on business.

He said he wants students to know that they are welcome to drop by and visit anytime, and he hopes they won't feel uncomfortable or intimidated just because he's the chancellor.

"My door is always open," Marsala said.

Students and professor conduct project on C. Bickham Dickson park for class credit

by
Lisa Branch

Students and Dr. Gary Hanson, LSUS professor and geologist, have almost completed the first phase of the Coring and Wellbore Logging Project, according to Hanson.

Project participants looked for pollutants such as nitrates in the water at C. Bickham Dickson Park, which is located next to the Red River, in their effort to research water quality issues.

The group is drilling a well and gathering information about the different levels below the ground. All the information is being logged and samples of the soil are being tested.

This is an ongoing project that will continue for years to come.

"Having a 600 acre weapons park adjacent to a major river system, from an educational standpoint, is unique," said Hanson, who is also the director of the Red River Watershed Management Institute, which is involved in the project.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Gary Hanson

Dr. Gary Hanson and students have been doing experiments at C. Bickham Dickson Park to research water quality issues.

Hanson's students gain experience and credit for an environmental class by working on the project.

Carrie Salinas, one of the students working on the project said it allows LSUS students to "get practical experience in environmental science."

Salinas holds a bachelor's degree in geology and is pursuing a second degree in envi-

ronmental science.

Pam Cunningham, a volunteer and sophomore psychology major said, "Ecology is very important. Water is a natural resource. If it's not preserved, our grandchildren and great grandchildren will be the victims, not us."

Hanson and his students are excited about this project because they gain experience as well as class credit.

Twenty volunteers from Halliburton assisted in the project by providing some funding and 20 volunteers for the logging and cementing stages.

MHC X-exploration of Tyler, Texas, provided the drilling rig and crew for the project.

Hanson said he hopes that the ongoing project will

encourage students to take geology and environmental science classes.

In the fall, Hanson will offer a course in hydrogeology in which students will continue to use the monitoring well for observation and testing.

For more information, contact Hanson at 797-5041.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Gary Hanson

Numerous volunteers took part in the drilling for soil samples at C. Bickham Dickson Park. Students received class credit for the environmental experience they gained.

The Port offers variety at low prices

by
Sara Moseley

By now almost everyone on campus has at least heard of The Port.

However, there are a lot of people who haven't tried it yet, and after experiencing the limited menu and high prices of The Manhattan, the previous on-campus restaurant, I don't blame them.

So for those of you who are still uncertain, I sampled some of the menu items to find out if The Port is worth a shot.

I've spent the past couple of weeks relaxing in the Port's comfortable, contemporary atmosphere, sampling items ranging from fast food to home-cooked.

I tried the cheeseburger (my personal favorite), which consisted of a mouth-watering piece of meat and a stack of juicy-ripe vegetables.

Included with the burger was a heaping pile of string-style French fries with just the

right amount of salt and grease.

Both the burger and the fries were delicious!

I went on to try the chicken finger basket (another personal favorite), which also came with a pile-o-fries.

The tenders are made up of healthy-sized portions of chicken with a crispy batter, making the basket a crunchy delight.

I also tried one of the many lunch specials The Port offers, one of which is offered daily.

I happened to be there on meatloaf day, and I must say that I was pleasantly surprised.

The meal was huge, easily big enough to feed two of me! It included a hearty portion of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans and a roll.

This made for a savory home-cooked style meal. It should be noted that the lunch specials are not frozen or pre-packaged; they are, in fact, real recipes made from



Photo by Dominic Claiborne

Kenan Vejzagic and Admir Seferovic eating at The Port. The Port has food, coffee and couches just in time for midterms.

scratch by The Port's kitchen staff, headed by Sue Brown whose self-acknowledged passion is cooking.

Brown's culinary know-how comes from years of cooking in her private life, as well as 15 years of professional experience, including owning a successful

tea room and catering business.

For those of you who'd rather skip eating meat, The Port offers some awesome choices for you, too. Items such as salads, fruits, finger foods and grilled cheese sandwiches are also on the menu.

If you're on campus in

the morning and feeling those hunger pains, The Port offers a variety of breakfast favorites. I tried the sausage-egg-n-cheese biscuit, and trust me, McDonald's and Burger King don't have anything on The Port.

They also have bagels, pancakes and dry cereal-- to name a few items. The Port also offers an eclectic blend of Community-brand coffees, both hot and frozen, served at its very own coffee bar.

Really, the only complaint I had is that The Port closes at 3:30 p.m. and there are a lot of people who are on campus for night classes that need to eat, too. However, The Port is a new establishment and has to test its ground in its first few weeks. Maybe if we give them enough business, they will extend the hours of operation.

With all of this in mind, The Port gets a solid thumbs-up from me.

The Port also caters. For more information, call 797-5181.

SOC approves Campus Ministry Association

by
Krystal Lee Williams

The Student Organizations Council (SOC) made a unanimous decision at its Friday, Feb. 1 meeting to recognize Campus Ministry as a campus organization.

Clara McDowell requested that the SOC review the Campus Ministry constitution and vote it as an official club on campus.

Campus Ministry meets at Centenary every Monday at 8 p.m. The club is sponsored by Shreveport/Bossier Campus Ministry and the United Methodist Student Movement.

Anyone can be a member, regardless of their denomination.

In other business, members of the Student Finance Association reported that they would use the money SOC gave them last fall for a tour of the Dallas Federal Reserve and FDIC this spring.

The group was scheduled to take the trip in October but was delayed because of the

Sept. 11 attacks.

SGA representatives announced that all other clubs were encouraged to get involved in the Volunteer Day on Feb. 16.

The SGA will need help with its phone book drive at Shreveport Green and other projects at the MLK Health Center and the Philadelphia Center. Students can sign up in the Office of Student

Activities.

Rotaract members announced that they will have a clothing drive for the Providence House, Feb. 4-15. All organizations are invited to help with the project.

SOC meets the first Friday of every month at noon in the Webster Room of the University Center.



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"Monologues" meet mixed reaction

Continued from pg. 1

Richard Murrell, a junior history major said he did not attend the performance because of the publicity associated with it.

"I don't really think it was put across properly," Murrell said.

He said he thought the coverage in The Almagest leading up to the event made it look tacky and didn't really communicate the serious aspect of "The Monologues."

Dr. Gloria Raines, vice chancellor of student affairs, said she was proud of the students who participated.

"It was a joy to see our students performing on stage," she said.

She also said she felt that some of "The Monologues" were sensationalized by the

author and that language used may have detracted from the material.

"I'm a strong feminist, but much of the language was offensive," she said.

Margo Williamson, who called herself "the oldest and wisest vagina in the group" joined the production because she thought it was "important to work to prevent violence against women and for women to learn to enjoy their sexuality."

Williamson said she sensed a mixed response from the audience. "Some people looked like they wanted to disappear and drop through the ground," she said.

Teri Froelich, a sophomore nutrition major, said she was attracted by the controversy surrounding "The Monologues."

"I told Lindsay that I was

willing to do something very outspoken, that I didn't shy away easily, so she cast me in the role of a female sex worker," Froelich said.

Her monologue, "The Woman Who Loved To Make Vaginas Happy," was the climax of the show, as it featured a variety of moans performed with increasing enthusiasm.

The mixture of serious and humorous material was designed to help prevent people from becoming uncomfortable, according to Meade.

"I think the performers did a great job of creating a fun atmosphere, while still addressing some important issues," Osteen said.

One of the issues addressed was rape. Meade herself performed "My Vagina Was My Village," which is the story of a young Bosnian

woman who was violently raped for days during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Meade said she chose this monologue because rape has always been an important issue to her.

"It is one of the most serious violations against women," Meade said.

The performers said they enjoyed being able to participate in something that brings attention to such an important issue as women's rights.

"I learned that you can contribute without dropping out of school, quitting your job, changing your entire lifestyle," Froelich said. "It was refreshing to see that I could help make a difference with something other than what I could contribute monetarily."

Bates said the important thing is that everyone came away with something. "They

laughed, many were moved by the more serious monologues, and, hopefully, the performance made people think."

Several of the performers indicated their interest in continuing the tradition next year, as the idea is to continue "The Monologues" until violence against women is stamped out around the world.

"Women in the U. S. face enough oppression, but we're lucky we were born here," Meade said. "So we should try to help those who weren't."

V-Day products, such as books, hats and shirts are still available. For more information, Meade can be contacted at LKMeade@yahoo.com

Proceeds from the performances benefit YWCA of Northwest Louisiana Sexual Assault Center.

Repeat/Delete may inflate GPA

By
Lauren Miller

Undergraduate students at LSUS may improve their grade point average by taking advantage of the university's current repeat/delete policy.

The repeat/delete policy was approved – despite some controversy – for students with academic difficulty and has been popular among students ever since, according to Dr. Gloria Raines, vice chancellor for student affairs.

The policy allows undergraduate students to repeat classes they failed, received a grade they were unhappy with or withdrew from before the course ended.

The grade earned during the repeat class will establish course credit and take the place of the previous course.

However, students receive no prior credit for taking a course if they choose to retake it and fail the course.

Repeat/delete offers students the chance to omit the first grade from being calculated into their overall and LSUS grade point averages.

The policy does not erase the evidence that students have taken a class twice; all courses will remain on students' transcripts.

Students should be aware

of some repeat/delete cautions.

Universities do not recognize other universities' repeat/delete policies.

Students who transfer colleges will not receive the grade point average earned through the repeat/delete course policy at their previous colleges.

LSUS will erase previous courses if both courses were taken at the university. Otherwise, the university takes students' cumulative averages of all courses previously taken.

Students should also be aware that graduate schools do not accept grade point averages based on repeat and delete calculations. Instead, they average every grade on a student's transcript.

Another caution of repeat/delete is the fact that not all courses may be repeated for credit.

The LSUS catalog specifies whether or not a course can be retaken.

The courses that students are allowed to repeat are only counted once in the total hours for a degree.

Information on the repeat/delete policy of LSUS can be found in the course catalog.

Students can also contact Director of Admissions Julie Wilkins at 797-5057 or Raines at 797-5116.

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>> **CONTACT:** Your local Army Recruiter
318-688-9781



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The Almagest

("al-meh-jest". n): Arabic: "The Majestic"
any of several medieval treatises on a branch of knowledge
(as the 9th century Arabic translation of Ptolemy's
Greek work on astronomy)
- Webster's Third New International Dictionary

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Call the *Almagest* at 797-5328 Email us at
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The *Almagest* requests your reactions through Letters to the
Editor. Letters should be typed and double spaced. Please include
your class and major field of study. Letters should be submitted to
The *Almagest* office, BH 344, by 5 p.m. on the Friday preceding
the Thursday publication date. Obscene, libelous and anonymous
letters may not be printed. The *Almagest* reserves the right to edit
letters.

From the editor

■ The student activities fee increase can improve academics at LSUS

The first response of many people when they
hear about the student activities fee increase is: "I
don't go to student activities; why should I have
to pay for them?"

Even though we've tried to inform our read-
ers of the benefits (and in the interest of fairness,
disadvantages) of the student activities fee
increase, many still doubt they will see any real
results.

Obviously not everyone is interested in the
activities that the Office of Student Activities
plans.

Many of these activities are directed at
younger students, and though OSA offers family-
oriented activities many "non-traditional" students
are unable to attend these functions because of the
pressures of juggling school, work and family
commitments.

As these students are quick to point out, we
come to school for an education — not entertain-
ment.

But, what they may not consider is how the
fee is the lifeblood of many academic programs at
LSUS.

We at The *Almagest* appreciate the
recognition we receive — even from those who
oppose the fee increase — for using our portion of
the fee to create a weekly newspaper to inform
our students.

Some of us will be spending the upcoming
weekend representing LSUS at a regional journal-
ism conference in Clarksville, Tenn., where we
will share ideas we'll use to improve our service
to you, our readers.

In the future we will be focusing especially
on campus controversies, such as the intellectual
property policy that the faculty and administration
are currently wrestling over.

In addition, we plan investigations into the
progress LSUS is making in complying with Title
IX legislation requiring equal opportunities for fe-
male athletes, the advertising of credit cards to
students and the reputation of LSUS in the
community.

The Student Government Association, which
is funded by the SA fee, attempts to represent the
interests of the students at the university level.
Also, SGA is the voice of LSUS students in Baton
Rouge, where important funding decisions are
made that directly affect academic programming.

Representing LSUS to the outside world is
one of the important functions of student organi-
zations, but we can't do it without proper funding.

For example, the Debate Club travels around
the region participating in tournaments featuring
students from around the country. Because the
Debate Club's budget has been cut drastically and
consistently, the debaters are not able to go to as
many conferences as they should.

Also, Debate cannot offer scholarships as it
used to, which means students must participate in
debate at a sacrifice to their classes, family or
work commitments. Debate cannot offer scholar-
ships to gifted area high school debaters, so they
are more likely to pick universities that are funded
adequately. Universities with more to offer.

This means LSUS loses an important oppor-
tunity not only to promote critical thought and

retorical skill among its students, but to boost its
reputation for academic excellence by consistently
producing an erudite debate force. The debaters
we have are competitive, but they need to be able
to go to competitions for recognition.

Spectra, the university's literary magazine,
had to cut visual art this year because its budget is
now virtually non-existent. The gifted artists who
come to LSUS no longer have the chance to high-
light their work in a publication that previously
gave them material for portfolios to present to
employers.

Spectra also gives students like me, who
thrive on creative writing and poetry, an outlet for
our expression. Without an outlet like this, why
should creative high school students consider go-
ing to LSUS? How can LSUS claim to provide a
well-rounded education if it neglects the arts and
humanities?

We aren't just developing ourselves as
students, or employees, but as human beings with
the ability to critically examine any issue we are
faced with while participating as citizens in the
leadership of Shreveport and America.

LSUS cannot afford to lose the minds of the
future, and we have an obligation to provide a rich
learning environment in which these minds can
thrive.

Shanmuka Shivashankara, leader of the Lin-
coln Society, hopes to start another scholarly
journal for discussing political and international
issues. But right now, the money isn't there.

The Society of Reason, a member of the Stu-
dent Organizations Council, offers students an
open environment in which to critically examine
issues philosophical, psychological, political and
even religious. If it is worth having an opinion
about, SOR will discuss it.

LSUS should promote intellectual pursuits
such as these to build its reputation as an oasis of
ideas in the desert of Caddo/Bossier.

But, without the increase in the student activi-
ties fee all organizations, including The *Almagest*,
will have to cut our budgets this year. This would
probably kill Spectra, cripple Debate and muffle
the voices of The *Almagest* and the SGA.

Clubs and professional organizations, mem-
bers of SOC, will whither away. Students will not
have a place to share ideas, learn skills outside the
classroom and form the contacts that will help
them establish themselves in the world after grad-
uation.

Cutting opportunities means LSUS has less to
offer prospective students, which means more of
the best and brightest of the area will choose to go
away to LSU in Baton Rouge, Tulane or
elsewhere to fulfill their educational goals.

LSUS will become a glorified community
college, professors will not be attracted to a
fertile crop of minds to nurture and the best
students will go elsewhere. Standards will decline
and your degree will devalue like the 27-year-old
currency the SA fee committee currently must try
to spend in 2002 dollars.

Your fee isn't just paying for more food, en-
tertainment and free stuff; it is paying to make
LSUS a better university, which makes us better
students and ideally, better people.

Fourty-five dollars is a small price to pay to
ensure that LSUS remains a university worth go-
ing to and one we can be proud to say we were a
part of.

-mm

Clarification

Shreveport: Louisiana, but not really cajun. More Texas than Mississippi, with a little Arkansas thrown in.

Letters to the editor

Dear Editor:

I have recently become aware of the proposal to increase the student activities fee in the fall. I am very much against this! The overall tuition is already high enough. I think the people who have proposed this increase and the people who support it should keep in mind that we are a commuter college. This university has an overwhelming number of part-time and return students who do not participate in the activities that this increase would affect.

I do however, believe that some organizations are more justified than others, such as the school paper, which allows for the dissemination of information to the student body. Without the school paper, I would be totally unaware of any proposed fee increase. The Almagest has written an article (front page) on this proposal, which basically explains where the fee increase would be spent and supporter comments, but it was completely one-sided. Although, Lisa Branch made a very good point in the February 8 edition of The Almagest when she suggested that student organizations should fund themselves (e.g. fundraisers).

In my opinion this fee increase would give a select few extra money to play around with, but the overwhelming majority would simply be coughing up more money for nothing. This university is centered around academics, not sports, comedians in the UC or weenie roasts in the court. I hope that Mr. Marsala and the LSU Board of Supervisors will take this into account before making their final decision.

Chad Anderson
General Studies

Dear Editor,

I am writing about the proposed doubling of the student activities fee. I am appalled that the school can seriously propose to raise this fee on the front page of the paper, and then have an article entitled, "Student Activities plans activities despite lack of turnout" on page 7 of the very same issue. Raising the student activities fee is not going to make students attend the activities. Most of the students at LSUS hold full or part-time jobs, and between work and study, have little time to attend these activities.

I propose that we approach this issue the fair way. Hold a vote where everyone can have the chance to voice their opinion. I would suggest putting it on the LSUS Web site since everyone already has access (everyone had to have access to register for classes). Three key questions should be asked of each student before this fee is raised:

1. How many activities held by the SGA have you attended in the last year?
2. Do you plan to attend activities held by the SGA this year?
3. Do you agree that raising the student activities fee from \$45 to \$90 would help make these activities more enjoyable?

These questions should be supplemented with examples of what the fee increase would go toward. If we are going to get extra benefits as a result of this fee, tell us!

This is not the same situation as when students get upset because of fee increases for electricity or security costs; this is a fee increase for something that most students do not seem to have much interest in. While I appreciate the efforts being made by the SGA to make school more fun, I simply do not have the time to attend these activities, and neither do most of the other students that I know. So why should we pay for them?

Elizabeth Hillringhouse

Fellow LSUS Students,

I would first like to thank the members of the SGA Senate for approving the increase in the student activity fee. So often decisions such as these, decisions that are controversial or go against the status quo, are never made because the attitude is that of apathy and wanting to not rock the boat. Thanks for taking time out to help this university in such a positive manner, and thank you for rocking the boat. LSUS will be a better university because of it.

So often we sleepwalk through segments of our lives until the segment we've been ignoring hits us in the pocket book. The SGA is sometimes thought of by students as a do-nothing organization, but this couldn't be further from the truth. The SGA has much influence on campus. We have the ability to influence decision-making in many areas. This being the case, I take the issue of communication with students very seriously.

When dealing with the increase in the student activity fee, I felt that communication with the students was especially important. Because of the substantial impact on students, the SGA organized an education campaign to get the word out to students about the student activity fee. The key aspects of this campaign involved sending out a post card to each student, holding an open house in our new offices to directly discuss the fee with students and requesting that The Almagest run stories on the issue (which they did beginning in fall 2001).

If you choose not to read the post card, come to the SGA open house or read The Almagest, that is not the SGA's fault. The SGA did as much as possible to get the word out to students, but a student looking to avoid ignorance must make some effort as well. After all the communication, the majority of the students who spoke with me or other members of the SGA directly agreed that an increase was needed in order for the university to grow and fulfill its expectation. We received very limited opposition through e-mail and phone. Many of the things that the SGA accomplishes go on behind the scenes or aren't noticed. I hope that now students realize the importance of the SGA and will look to get involved. Elections for executive and college senator positions are March 18-24. If you are interested in running and taking an active part in making LSUS a better place, contact us. If you haven't the time to commit to being in SGA, take 30 seconds out of your day to vote. Look for common hour, SGA-sponsored discussion forums in The Port soon, and as always, the SGA meeting on Thursday during common hour is open to all students.

Thank you,

Jeff Strozier, SGA President
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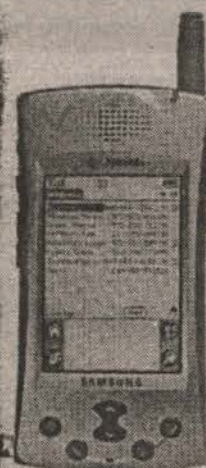
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